

Message Text

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54

ACTION L-03

INFO OCT-01 ARA-16 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 SEC-03 JUSE-00

SS-20 PRS-01 USIE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01

DRC-01 INRE-00 (ISO) W

----- 068936

O P 071627Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY NASSAU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4992

INFO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L NASSAU 1894

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR CPRS BF

SUBJ: EXTRADITION - ROBERT L. VESCO

1. MAGISTRATE OSADEBAY RULED TODAY THAT VESCO HAS NO CASE TO ANSWER AND HAS ORDERED HIS RELEASE. WE ARE REVIEWING DECISION WITH ATTORNEYS AND WILL COMMENT BY SUBSEQUENT TELEGRAM. HOWEVER, IT APPEARS TO BE A DECISION BASED ON RESPECTABLE, IF CERTAINLY NOT INCONTROVERTIBLE, LEGAL GROUNDS, GIVEN THE WEAK SPOTS IN CASE AS IT DEVELOPED.

2. PRESS GUIDANCE: WE PROPOSE THAT OFFICIAL USG PRESS COMMENT BE LIMITED TO EXPRESSION OF DISAPPOINTMENT THAT DECISION DID NOT GO AS WE WOULD HAVE WISHED AND COMPLIMENTING OUR LOCAL ATTORNEYS FOR DOING A LAUDATORY JOB IN PRESENTING US CASE, WHICH WE BELIEVE TO BE A FAR STRONGER ONE THAN MAGISTRATE'S DECISION GIVES CREDIT FOR. THERE WILL PROBABLY BE QUESTIONS SPECULATING ON WHETHER POLITICAL PRESSURE WAS PUT ON MAGISTRATE OR WHETHER HE WAS ANTI-US, PRO-VESCO OR OTHERWISE BIASED. EMBASSY WILL STATE "WE CERTAINLY DO NOT HAVE ANY INFORMATION WHICH WOULD LEAD US TO QUESTION THE INTEGRITY OF BAHAMIAN COURTS". ANY QUESTIONS RELATING TO FUTURE ACTIONS AGAINST VESCO (E.G. POSSIBLE APPEAL OR EXTRADITION ELSEWHERE) WILL BE REFERRED TO JUSTICE.

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3. AS WE HAVE POINTED OUT IN OUR REPORTING, THERE APPEARED TO BE SEVERAL GAPS AND SOFT SPOTS IN US CASE. THE MAGISTRATE HAS STRESSED THESE IN HIS DECISION. IT IS TRUE, HOWEVER, THAT ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS DURING THE HEARINGS THE MAGISTRATE APPEARED OPENLY BIASED GAINST US. SPECULATION ON CAUSE OF HIS ATTITUDE IS WIDE-RANGING -- PERSONAL DISLIKE FOR WALLACE-WHITFIELD, PLAYING TO PRO-VESCO SYMPATHIE, POLITICAL PRES-SURES (WE ARE SKEPTICAL THAT SUCH EXIST, ALTHOUGH OSADEBAY MAY INFER THEM) OR A PAYOFF. AS THERE IS NOT PROOF TO BACK ANY OF THESE VARIOUS EXPLANATIONS AS BEING RESPONSIBLE FOR DECISION, EMBASSY BELIEVES WE SHOULD NOT LET OUTCOME OF CASE SPILL OVER IN A WAY THAT WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT GOOD RELATIONS WE ARE TRYING TO BUILD WITH THIS NEW COUNTRY IN WHICH WE HAVE MORE AT STAKE THAN VESCO'S EXTRADITION. DISPARAGING REMARKS OR INNUENDOS ABOUT MOTIVES ARE LIKELY TO COST US MORE THAN THEY WOULD GAIN US, HOWEVER MUCH PRESSURE THERE IS TO LET OFF STEAM OF DISAPPOINTMENT AFTER SO MUCH HARD WORK IN A GOOD CAUSE.

SPIERS

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Document Unique ID: 00
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Executive Order: GS
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